(b) and (c) The G-8 reaffirmed their commitment to open markets more widely to trade in agricultural goods, industrial goods and services, and in agriculture to reduce trade distorting domestic subsidies and eliminate all forms of export subsidies by a credible end date. The impact on India will depend on the manner in which this is reflected in the outcome of the ongoing multilateral trade negotiations.

Indo-Banglandesh relations

377. SHRI MATILAL SARKAR: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the extent of progress made in diplomatic relation between India and Bangladésh during the last one year;

(b) whether there has been any improvement in matters of trade and commerce between India and Bangladesh during the above period; and

(c) what steps have been suggested to reduce border-tension between these two countries?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI E. AHAMMED): (a) India's relations with Bangladesh continued to make progress during the last one year. Prime Minister met Bangladesh Prime Minister on the sidelines of the BIMSTEC Summit in July 2004.The Bangladesh Foreign Minister visited India twice in May-June 2004 and in November 2004. Other Ministerial visits from Bangladesh include those of Minister of Commerce in November 2004, Minister of Finance in December 2004 and Health Minister in April 2005. Official level meetings included those of the Home Secretaries and the Water Resources Secretaries in September 2004. Foreign Office Consulations were held in June 2005. During these meetings, both sides reaffirmed the importance that they attach to the bilateral relationship and expressed their intent to further expand, deepen and strengthen cooperation.

(b) Bilateral trade and commercial relations continued to show healthy growth rates. Bilateral trade in 2004-05 touched US$ 1.6 Billion. Meetings have been held of the Joint Working Groups on Trade, Para and Non Tariff barriers and, the Joint Customs Group to consider a bilateral Free

Trade Agreement, the elimination of para and non-tariff barriers and customs related issues to facilitate the flow of trade.

(c) Regular interaction has continued between Border Security Force (BSF) and Bangladesh Rifles (BDR) at various levels including at the level of the Director Generals. Border management issues were also discussed in the meetings of the Home Secretaries in September 2004 and Foreign Secretaries in June 2005. Coordinated patrolling by the two border guarding forces has commenced in some sectors of the India-Bangladesh border.

India's role in G-8 Summit

378. SHRI S. ANBALAGAN: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Prime Minister attended the G-8 Summit in Scotland, recently;

(b) if so, the details of the agenda and the outcome of the Summit meeting; and

(c) the role played by India in the Summit and the benefits to be accrued to India as a result of India's participation in the Summit?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI E. AHAMMED): (a) Yes.

(b) Issues relating to the global economy, climate change and sustainable development were on the agenda of the Summit meeting. The outcome of the Summit is the initiation of a new dialogue between the G-8 nations and other countries with significant energy needs, consistent with the aims and principles of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change.

(c) India played a constructive role in the Summit by proposing a new paradigm for international co-operation for action on climate change. The countries participating in the meeting welcomed the ideas put forward by India. Participation in the Summitt provided India an opportunity to project its views on issues of global concern and make positive recommendations on the ways forward.